

LABOR RELATIONS



June 20, 2019



Mr. Brian J. Wagner  
President  
National Association of Postal Supervisors  
1727 King Street, Suite 400  
Alexandria, VA 22314-2753

Dear Brian:

As a matter of general interest, the Postal Service has created Statistical Programs (SP) Letter #5, Fiscal Year (FY) 2019.

The subject letter details updates to the In-Office Cost-Cluster System.

We have enclosed a final draft copy of SP Letter #5, FY 2019.

Please contact Bruce Nicholson at 7773 if you have questions concerning this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Alan S. Moore".

Alan S. Moore  
Manager  
Labor Relations Policies and Programs

Enclosure

FINANCE



June 4, 2019

MANAGERS (DISTRICT)  
MANAGERS, FINANCE (DISTRICT)  
MANAGERS, FINANCIAL PROGRAMS COMPLIANCE (DISTRICT)

SUBJECT: *Policy Memo*, Statistical Programs (SP) Letter #5, FY19: In-Office Cost-Cluster System

This letter is to inform you of changes to the In-Office Cost-Cluster System (IOCS-Cluster) and to provide you with updated policies and procedures, effective July 1, 2019.

In January 2019, the Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC) rejected the proposed IOCS-Cluster System design. To address their comments and concerns, we adjusted the system design. Overall, the changes are:

- IOCS-Cluster tests are no longer combined with CCCS tests.
- IOCS-Cluster now only includes existing IOCS panel offices.
- IOCS-Cluster on-site tests now sample carriers in a delivery finance number instead of carriers in a delivery ZIP Code.
- The CODES software automatically applies a random minute, and 5 or 10 minute sampling intervals based off of the test type.
- Telephone tests are now split between two groups based on CAG.

Attached are all IOCS-Cluster policies and procedures.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joseph B. Hurley".

Joseph Hurley  
Manager  
Statistical Programs

Attachment

cc: Joseph Corbett  
Steven R. Phelps  
Richard T. Cooper  
John P. Kelley  
Brad V. Pafford  
Veeramany Sthanumurthy  
Alan S. Moore  
Area Controllers  
Area Accounting Managers  
Luisa Gierbolini, Office of Inspector General  
Allison Vetter, Senior Manager, Ernst and Young

## **IOCS-Cluster Policies and Procedures Q4FY19**

### **Overview**

The IOCS-Cluster system is designed to sample city carriers efficiently by scheduling a series of readings on multiple carriers working in a delivery finance number. Readings are taken over an entire block of time (e.g., the morning hours while carriers are still in the office). These morning tests require a data collector to be on-site for an extended period of time in the morning.

In the afternoon, carriers spend little time clocked in to the office and generally do not handle much mail; therefore, it is difficult to justify sending a data collector to conduct an on-site reading. Instead, our approach is to cluster many telephone readings for carriers across the district over an extended period of time.

This document outlines policy and procedures for conducting IOCS-Cluster tests.

### **System Design**

The IOCS-Cluster system does not sample specific employees, but rather samples employees clocked to a specific delivery finance number in TACS. The few randomly selected employees within a delivery finance number are scaled to represent all the employees working under that delivery finance number. The same principle applies for afternoon telephone tests. The randomly selected employees from the delivery finance numbers are scaled to represent all the employees in that district during the afternoon.

The delivery finance numbers sampled from TACS are restricted to the existing IOCS panel.

### **Eligible Employees**

The IOCS-Cluster tests include the following eligible employees, who are working on the day of the test and assigned to the test delivery finance number:

- a. Employees with roster designations 13, 33, 43, 63, 83, 84.
- b. Carriers clocked to LDC 21, 22, 23, 24, or 27.
- c. Carriers acting as a delivery supervisor (204-B), clocked to LDC 20.
- d. Carriers borrowed from another finance number (e.g., City Carrier Assistants [Roster Designation 84]).

To identify these carriers you may use the following tools:

1. IOCS-Cluster CODES software: Provides the route that the carrier is clocked to most frequently, in addition to the most frequently clocked zone. It also indicates if the carrier is clocked to Special Purpose Routes (SPR) or as a supervisor (SUP).
2. TACS: Indicates the routes and MODS codes to which the carrier has previously clocked (see the Employee List in TACS).
3. DOIS Weekly Schedule report: Lists the carriers scheduled for each day and route. Unfortunately, this schedule is often not updated until the morning the carriers arrive. You may ask the delivery supervisor for a copy of the schedule.

### **Types of Tests**

There are four types of IOCS-Cluster tests. The test type is provided along with other test information in the CODES WBU and in the CODES software.

Two types are on-site tests, where you spend the morning (from carrier arrival until 11:00 a.m.) collecting data:

1. T020: Carriers are sampled every 5 minutes.
2. T021: Carriers are sampled every 10 minutes.

The other two types are telephone tests, where you spend an hour (e.g., 3:00 p.m.–4:00 p.m.) conducting telephone readings on carriers in IOCS panel offices:

3. TP10: Carriers in CAG A, B, and C offices.
4. TP11: Carriers in CAG D, E, F, G, and H offices.

## **On-Site IOCS-Cluster Tests**

### **Required Materials**

To prepare for IOCS-Cluster on-site tests, obtain the following materials:

- a. A CODES laptop with fully charged battery pack.
- b. An AC power pack with a power cord.
- c. A barcode scanner.
- d. An electronic scale indicating pounds, ounces, and tenths of ounces.
- e. A measuring tape.
- f. Current sample file on the CODES laptop.
- g. Access to the following documents:
  1. Handbook F-45.
  2. Statistical Programs (SP) letters (available at <http://blue.usps.gov/finance/pricing/statistical-programs/references/sp-letters.htm>).
  3. The IOCS Reference Guide (RG) (available at <http://blue.usps.gov/finance/pricing/statistical-programs/references/reference-guides.htm>).

### **Contact the Test Facility**

You must contact the postmaster, manager(s), or supervisor(s) of the test facility/facilities the day before the test and discuss the following:

- a. Explain that an IOCS-Cluster test is scheduled for their delivery finance number. Discuss the test procedures if the postmaster or supervisor is unfamiliar with the test.
- b. Confirm the location of the test facility, or primary facility. This is the facility which houses the carriers for the test delivery finance number. If there are multiple facilities that house carriers for the test delivery finance number, identify the facility with the most carriers and conduct the test there.

**Note:** Contact the other facilities (secondary facilities) and ask for a list of carriers who are expected to work on the test date, and for the carrier start times. Explain that you may call the facility periodically throughout the test day up until 11:00 a.m.
- c. Explain that you need to arrive early enough to set up before the carriers' expected arrival time.
- d. Explain that you need information about the status of each carrier assigned to the test delivery finance number upon your arrival to the facility.
- e. Ask for the carriers expected arrival time.
- f. Ask if any carriers are expected to be off or on leave.

### **Day of the Test**

Arrive at the test facility one hour before the carriers arrive. You may want to set up your laptop, scanner, and scale on a wheeled container so you can move around the office to take readings. Meet with the supervisor to determine which carriers are expected to clock in to the test delivery finance number on the day of the test. If applicable, contact the secondary facilities to see if there are any changes to the previously provided list of employees.

### Employees Working Today List

In the CODES software, add or remove eligible carriers in the *Employees Working Today* list, so that all carriers identified as working any time on the test day, in all identified facilities, are included. Manually add any carriers not listed in the carrier list with the "Add New Carrier" button.

**Note:** If the supervisor is unsure if a carrier is working on the day of the test, include the carrier in the *Employees Working Today* list. If that carrier is selected for sampling and does not report to work, select "Not Clocked in Now" for that carrier each time they are sampled. Once the supervisor confirms that the employee will not report to work at any time that day, select "Unexpected Leave".

**Note:** If the supervisor says an unspecified CCA is working on the day of the test, click the "Add New Carrier" button to add a generic employee to the *Employees Working Today* list. The CODES software produces the *Add New Employee* screen, where you enter a mock carrier name and EIN along with the Lead Finance Number and Roster Designation. If the generic CCA is selected for sampling, ask the supervisor to notify you when the employee arrives. Conduct readings on that carrier whenever the generic CCA is sampled.

Once the list of eligible carriers is finalized, click "Done". The software randomly selects 6 employees for sampling from the list of eligible carriers. Confirm again with the primary (or secondary) facility supervisor that the sampled employees are working on the day of the test.

**Note:** If any of the sampled employees are not expected to work on the day of the test, click the "Update Employee List" button to remove those employees from the list of selected employees. Once you select the "Conduct Readings" button, you cannot change the list of selected employees.

### Conduct Readings

Ask the supervisor for the sampled employee arrival times and case locations. Also ask for assistance with identifying the sampled employees when they arrive. Select the "Conduct Readings" button when any of the 6 sampled employees begin to clock in. For each reading, locate the selected employee in the office, parking lot, loading area, or by telephone (if the employee works at the secondary office) and record information about the employee's activities at the time of the reading.

**Note:** If there are 3 or fewer sampled employees, do not conduct readings on an employee more than once every 20 minutes.

The CODES software produces the *Header* screen, which provides the following information:

- a. The current reading (EIN, name, roster designation, and title).
- b. Test information (random minute, next reading time, and number of sampled readings).
- c. The full list of employees selected for sampling and their information (name, EIN, roster designation, finance number, zone, route, location, and reading status). This list updates as the readings are conducted.

Enter information for the current reading:

- a. Whether the sampled employee is assigned as a Carrier, Clerk/Mailhandler, Supervisor, or Other. If the carrier changed crafts and is paid as that craft, record this in the software. For example, if the carrier is temporarily acting as a supervisor (204-B), select "Supervisor". If the carrier transferred to a Clerk position, select "Clerk/Mailhandler". If the carrier is working as a clerk on light or limited duty, select "Clerk/Mailhandler". If the carrier is temporarily performing the work of another craft while still clocked to LDC 21, 22, 23, 24, or 27, select "Carrier" and add remarks.
- b. Indicate the employee status:
  1. Working Now in this Location/Zone: Select this option if the carrier is clocked in to work, either in the office or on the street.
  2. Not Clocked in Now to this Location/Zone: Select this option if the carrier is not clocked in to the test delivery finance number at the time of the reading.

3. **Cannot Conduct Reading:** Select this option if you cannot conduct the reading before the next reading's scheduled start time. Also, select this option if you need to take a break and cannot conduct readings during that time.
  4. **Unexpected Leave:** Select this option if you discover that the employee who was previously identified as working is no longer working that day, for example, if the employee unexpectedly takes sick leave. The software replaces up to two carriers with other carriers identified as working.
- c. Select the applicable options in the employee activity screens.
  - d. In the *End Employee Reading* screen, enter the Actual Reading Time, Carrier Route Number, Carrier Route ZIP, and any Additional Remarks about the reading.  
**Note:** If the sampled employee is at a secondary facility, provide additional remarks that the information was collected by telephone, along with the respondent name.

### Deleting or Canceling Readings

If you find that you made an error for a particular reading (e.g., sampled the incorrect employee), use either the Cancel Reading or Delete Reading buttons to correct the test:

- a. Select the "Cancel Reading" button to permanently delete any reading.
- b. Select the "Delete Reading" button to delete the previous reading, allowing you to complete the reading again.  
**Note:** If you cannot complete the reading before the next assigned reading time, select Cannot Conduct Reading.

### Time Constraints

In order to make it easier to locate the carrier in the parking area, ask the carrier for the location of their vehicle. Some facilities have numbered spaces, but even learning the general area of the location of the carrier's vehicle is useful.

The allotted 5 or 10 minute reading time (depending on the test type) may not allow enough time to obtain and record the mailpiece characteristics that the carrier is handling when they are in the parking area. In this case, record that you could not obtain the mailpiece characteristics at Q16F1b. Similarly, if this significantly delays the carrier, then record that you could not obtain the mailpiece characteristics. Do not take your laptop out to the parking lot; rather, leave your laptop inside the facility. Bring any sample mailpieces into the facility to record characteristics and scan barcodes.

If you still find that you cannot complete the reading before the next assigned reading time, select Cannot Conduct Reading in the *Header* screen.

### Ending the Test

As the day progresses, most of the sample carriers may be on the street. Continue to record those readings as on the street. If all selected carriers left for the street and the supervisor does not expect the carriers back before 11:00 a.m., record these readings ahead of time as on the street readings for all carriers (up until 11:00 a.m.).

Repeat the following steps in the CODES software until the next reading time passes 11:00 a.m.:

- a. In the *Header* screen select Working Now in this Location/Zone.
- b. Select the applicable options in the employee activity screens.
- c. In the *End Employee Reading* screen, change the Actual Reading Time to the Scheduled Reading Time, Carrier Route Number, Carrier Route ZIP, and any Additional Remarks about the reading.

The software displays a warning when attempting to end an IOCS-Cluster test without recording readings up until 11:00 a.m.

When the next reading time passes 11:00 a.m., select the End Test button in the *Header* screen. Enter the test duration time (hh:mm) and final remarks about the test.

## Telephone IOCS-Cluster Tests

### Required Materials

To prepare for telephone IOCS-Cluster tests, obtain the following materials:

- a. A list of district post office telephone numbers. The day before the test, you must review the Selected Employees list in the CODES software and identify all post office telephone numbers for the listed employees.
- b. A CODES laptop with fully charged battery pack.
- c. An AC power pack with a power cord.
- d. Current sample file on the CODES laptop.
- e. Access to the following documents:
  1. Handbook F-45.
  2. Statistical Programs (SP) letters (available at: <http://blue.usps.gov/finance/pricing/statistical-programs/references/sp-letters.htm>).
  3. The IOCS Reference Guide (RG) (available at: <http://blue.usps.gov/finance/pricing/statistical-programs/references/reference-guides.htm>).

### Conduct Readings

Telephone readings are scheduled for a one hour time block. The software displays a list of 30 carriers at the IOCS panel offices in random order grouped by finance number. You must call the sample office to perform a telephone reading for each carrier in the list in turn. Perform as many readings as you can complete during the time block.

The CODES software produces the *Header* screen, which provides the following information:

- a. The current reading (EIN, name, roster designation, and title).
- b. Test information (random minute, next reading time, and number of sampled readings).  
**Note:** There is no random minute or next reading time displayed for IOCS-Cluster telephone readings. Conduct each reading one after the other.
- c. The full list of employees selected for sampling and their information (name, EIN, roster designation, finance number, zone, route, location, and reading status). This list updates as the readings are conducted.

Enter information for the current reading:

- a. The respondent's name (last, first). A list of names automatically populates as you type the respondent's last name. Select the correct respondent name from the list. The employee status buttons are not available until you select a respondent.
- b. Whether the sampled employee is assigned as a Carrier, Clerk/Mailhandler, Supervisor, or Other. If the carrier changed crafts and is paid as that craft, record this in the software. For example, if the carrier is temporarily acting as a supervisor (204-B), select "Supervisor". If the carrier transferred to a Clerk position, select "Clerk/Mailhandler". If the carrier is working as a clerk on light or limited duty, select "Clerk/Mailhandler". If the carrier is temporarily performing the work of another craft while still clocked to LDC 21, 22, 23, 24, or 27, select "Carrier" and add remarks.
- c. The employee status:
  1. Working Now in this Location/Zone: Select this option if the carrier is clocked in to work, either in the office or on the street.
  2. Not Clocked in Now to this Location/Zone: Select this option if the carrier is not clocked in to work.
  3. Cannot Conduct Reading: Select this option if you cannot conduct the reading before the next reading's scheduled start time.
  4. Respondent Not Available: Select this option if you cannot reach the carrier's supervisor within 3 minutes.

- d. Select the applicable options in the employee activity screens.
- e. In the *End Employee Reading* screen, enter the Actual Reading Time, Carrier Route Number, Carrier Route ZIP, and any Additional Remarks about the reading.

**Test Scheduling, Review, and Approval**

The following guidelines apply to both on-site and telephone IOCS-Cluster tests. All IOCS-Cluster tests must be conducted as scheduled.

**Rescheduling Tests**

Reschedule the test if:

- a. The test was not conducted on the originally scheduled test date and the test date is not the Quarterly Training date.
- b. A technical issue or data collection error impacted the integrity of the test data, where more than half the test data is compromised.

The procedures for rescheduling an IOCS-Cluster test are the following:

- a. Conduct the rescheduled test 1 week later than the originally scheduled test date, on the same day of the week.
- b. If a test rescheduled from a previous week must be rescheduled again, the MFPC or SSP must follow the same procedures. The MFPC or SSP must repeat the rescheduling procedures until the test is completed.
- c. If a test cannot be rescheduled to the same day of the week for any of the following weeks of the quarter, the MFPC or SSP may reschedule the test to any of the last seven days of the quarter.

**Summary of Procedures:**

If the following situation:	Then follow these guidelines:
The test is not conducted on the originally scheduled test day.	Rescheduled the test 1 week later, on the same day as originally scheduled.
The test is rescheduled within the last 7 days of the quarter.	Reschedule the test to any day within the last 7 days of the quarter.
The test is not conducted on the last day of the quarter.	Leave the test as delinquent.

**Canceling Tests**

Select the Quarterly Training Date cancelation option in the CODES WBU when a test is originally scheduled on the Quarterly Training date. Otherwise, tests not conducted by the end of the quarter must remain delinquent.

**Test Review and Approval**

Look for the following when reviewing and approving On-Site IOCS-Cluster tests:

- a. Test start time is correct.
- b. Readings were generally taken within the 5 or 10 minute time intervals, depending on the test type.
- c. Readings were conducted up until at least 11:00 a.m.
- d. Barcodes were scanned when expected.

Look for the following when reviewing and approving a telephone IOCS-Cluster test:

- a. Test start time is within 5 minutes of scheduled one hour block.



b. Readings are conducted consecutively, without large time breaks.

Submit an entry to the anomaly log prior to test approval whenever a test was compromised and does not meet the criteria for a reschedule. Contact the Statistical Programs Service Center with any outstanding questions or concerns about a test.